

News from the Divisions

SCHOOL LIBRARIES SECTION NSW GROUP

ASCIS Futures: Have you traded yet?

At a recent seminar organised by the committee of the NSW Group, School Libraries Section, the current state and future directions of the Australian Schools Catalogue Information Service (ASCIS) were canvassed. Colin MacDonald, Chairman of the Board of ASCIS, provided the seminar participants with an introduction to ASCIS. In describing the aims of ASCIS he stressed that part of its on-going role is to investigate, research and monitor developments as they relate to cataloguing and information retrieval. Dissemination and publication of the results of this research is a vital part of that role. He then outlined the future alternatives for access of the ASCIS database at the school level. While access to the service via microfiche will continue, ASCIS is looking towards providing its services via microcomputers within schools. With the increasing automation of school library management this development will be looked upon with great interest by teacher-librarians. ASCIS will undertake to investigate software packages for a variety of management functions which are compatible with ASCIS.

The second major speaker of the day was Georgina Cane, Executive Director of ASCIS. She described her perception of the function of the school library and how a cataloguing service contributes to that role. In giving an explanation of ASCIS it became apparent that it has much to offer teacher-librarians in areas such as on-line searching, acquisitions, periodicals/serials, circulation and stock control as well as cataloguing data. Georgina provided concrete evidence of the usefulness of ASCIS through an on-line demonstration using an IBM microcomputer, projector and an 8 foot screen. Participants were taken step by

step through the procedures for on-line cataloguing. This process demonstrated some of the potential of ASCIS for on-line searching. Other future directions of ASCIS include the potential to use the program's abstracting facility to include some assessment information about particular resources and free text searching of abstracts. The remainder of the seminar was divided into two segments. The first grouped together participants with similar experience into workshop groups where they used ASCIS and discussed problems and advantages in its implementation. While problems were voiced, there was a positive attitude towards ASCIS and a willingness to work through the problems encountered. In the second session a panel of three teacher-librarians representing primary, secondary, government and non-government school interests described personal experiences of ASCIS, its usefulness and how problems were overcome.

The seminar was fully subscribed by both users of and newcomers to ASCIS. Users saw it as a venue for voicing concerns as well as learning of intended developments. Participants expressed the view that it had successfully fulfilled a need for more information about the future course of ASCIS.

TAFE SECTION

The General Council meeting held in Canberra on 29, 30 March 1985, approved the formation of an LAA/TAFE Section. It is proposed to form an interim committee from New South Wales to look after the business of the new Section until an election can be held.

The election will follow the LAA timetable for the election of office bearers, viz:

Calls for nominations — July/August

Close of nominations — 1 September

Distribution of ballot papers — by 15 October

Close of ballot — mid November.

The new committee will take office on 1 January 1986.

It is possible for LAA members, interested in a TAFE Section, to change their nominated section *now* by contacting the LAA. Alternatively members may wish to pay a \$3 fee and nominate the TAFE Section as an additional section.

Bernice Burgess
Interim President

CENTRAL QUEENSLAND BRANCH

The Central Queensland Branch recently held a very successful seminar on Government Publications. The principal speaker was Mr. Michael Harrington, who is supervising editor of the Australian Government Publishing Service. He presented papers covering parliamentary materials, legislation and law reports, executive materials from government departments and selection, acquisition and user skills. He also organised two very solid and worthwhile workshops for the participants.

The seminar was not all work, however, and Michael managed to fit a couple of social occasions and an interview with the local newspaper into his packed schedule.

Small groups such as the Central Queensland Branch tend to be very aware of their professional isolation. Therefore the careful preparation which Michael put into the papers, was much appreciated by all members and contributed in no small way to their professional development.

Elizabeth Parker
President

CATALOGUERS' SECTION (ACT GROUP)

The ACT Group of the Cataloguers' Section has taken on a big load this year — the organisation of the national cataloguer's conference, to be held in Canberra on 11-12 October.

In order to stake an early claim on the best speakers, invitations to speak were sent out late in 1984 or early in 1985. As a result, the program has already been finalised. Under the umbrella theme of 'The Management of Cataloguing', the conference will include papers on the management of cataloguing standards, the costing of cataloguing, subject access, selecting and using a cataloguing terminal, retrospective conversion, and special library cataloguing. The organising committee is delighted at the impressive range of speakers: Pauline A. Cochrane, S. Michael Malinconico, Sue Beatty, Warwick Cathro, Anne Clarkson, Margaret Coffey, Graham Dudley, George Eichinski, Elaine Hall, Peter Hawker, Anthony Ketley, Colin Steele and Patricia Stewart. Registration brochures will be mailed to all Australian members of the Cataloguers' Section and to all institutional members of the LAA during May.

Linda Groom
Organising Committee member

ILL OFFICERS TAKE HEART!

Department of Housing and Construction Central Office Library has set up a software programme using DBase III on the IBM PC which takes over the repetitive tasks involved in inter library loans.

It types out AACOBs forms, overdue notices and copyright declaration forms. Lists of the whole data base, of aged loans and lists by borrower/requestor, due date and title can be produced.

More information can be obtained by contacting Graham Everett on (062) 43 6397.

In brief

Marilyn Beamish has taken up an appointment as Systems Librarian with the Datapoint Corporation, joining the team supporting the locally developed Data Library System.

Brooks, Ross and Associates Pty Ltd, computer software suppliers, see the taking up of 30% of its shareholding by AWA as an expansionary move. The company is going through a period of intense development work to prepare for a marketing drive on its local government package, BLIS.

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